

**Town of Westford  
Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes  
April 3, 2006  
Cameron Senior Center  
Pleasant Street  
7:00 P.M.**

The following are the minutes of the April 3, 2006, Town of Westford Parks & Recreation Commission meeting. A permanent set of these minutes (maintained for a period of six years) is retained in the Town Clerk's office. A set of these minutes and a tape recording are retained in the Parks & Recreation Department.

**Commissioners Present:** Colleen Barisano, Kacy Caviston, John Johnson, Carolyn Metcalf, Steve Spinney, Mary Ellen Tynan  
Kacy Caviston ran the meeting in Wayne's absence

**Staff Present:** Patricia Savage, Director, Sandra Habe, Asst. Director

**I. Approval of Agenda (7:10 p.m.)**

Mary Ellen motioned to approve the agenda. John seconded it. Motion passed unanimously.

**II. Approval of Meeting Minutes – March 6, 2006**

Mary Ellen motioned to approve the March 6, 2006 minutes. Carolyn seconded the motion. Steve Spinney abstained because he was not at the last meeting.

**III. Projects/Tasks**

**A. East Boston Camps –**

a. EBC Master Plan Committee – Pat told the commission that the EBC committee hired a consultant and the consultant met with the committee to review a timetable of tasks to be completed by 2007. There are some questions regarding some determinations made by the Committee that may or may not be within their jurisdiction and may instead be under the control of the Board of Selectman. The day to day operations fall under the jurisdiction of the Board of Selectman. The collection of the rental money will be used by the East Boston Social Center to run their programs. This may be a conflict for the Conservation Preservation Committee and the requirements and responsibilities under state law. Pat has contacted the Board of Selectman to see about using the East Boston Camps for summer staff training. The Committee needs to refocus on their charter – the development of the master plan.

b. Parks & Recreation – Nutting Road

iii. Neighborhood Meeting – The commission would like to set the meeting for the week after April vacation. Pat obtained the list of abutters from the assessor. Sandra will request the cafeteria for Wednesday, April 26 at 7:30 p.m. Charlie Russman offered to host something at his house, but there is a potential for a fairly large meeting. There are 26 houses included in the list, as well as the potential for other residents.

- iv. **Booster's/Fundraising** – Lacrosse has a fundraiser this week and are already talking about raising additional funds to help support building in-filled turf fields at Nutting Road.

## **B. Facilities**

- a. **Old Highway Garage** – no new information
- b. **VMC (Veterans Memorial Complex)** –Carolyn says according to the Town records the additional courts are not included on their drawings, and therefore we do not have permission to put the additional courts at Stony Brook. There are new people working for the town who were not there during the design of the complex, so it will take additional time for research. Mike Liu was asked to add the courts in, but Ross can not find any records. Andrea Peraner-Sweet was the chair at the time so Carolyn will follow up with her.

The Pro-Am went well. The checks are coming in the mail.

The wood is being delivered this week. The backboards will be installed at the Stony Brook courts after they are painted. The backboards will be put on both the tennis and basketball sides of the court. A sign should be posted that say, "Tennis balls only".

Approximately \$10,000 has been raised so far.

- c. **Ice Rink** – no new information
- d. **Swimming Pool** – The spread sheet has been created for the pool. It gives a break down of revenues and expenses. Pat can email the spreadsheet if anyone on the commission is interested.

## **C. Properties** – no new information

Kacy brought up the need for the Commission to lay the groundwork to make the public and Board of Selectman aware that the Parks & Recreation Commission is interested in the Lavallee property. Kacy would like to have a letter sent to the B.O.S. or to get on to the fall Town Meeting agenda for a feasibility study. Pat will talk to Norman about the amount to request for the study.

- D. American Legion Playground** – Pat will meet with the vendor for the playground on April 6. Pat showed an example of the play structure that we are planning to purchase. We are proposing to move the fence in to gain parking spaces. Pat is working with the Graniteville Pride members to determine the number of "play components" included in the playground. The play structure shown is for ages 5 to 12. If there are available funds a super scoop (sand toy) will be purchased. The group also wants swings for older and younger children. The Commission is concerned about obtaining the safest possible equipment.

Pat showed the proposed parking plan for the American Legion ball fields. The spots can be marked with products designed for this type of surface. The spaces must be marked or we won't maximize spaces.

G-3 – Ryan O’Neil would like to put up a snow fence to keep people off of the field. The caution tape that was placed on the field was ignored. The field was rebuilt and needs to be untouched for the season. Pat and Kacy suggested putting gates near the dugouts to keep people off of the field. The snow fence could also be used on the field.

**E. Marketing** – no new information.

**F. Rules & Regulations policies and signs** – John took digital pictures of the beaches and selected parks. Now the signs can be reviewed and changes may be recommended. The Commission discussed a pooper scooper law that they would like to encourage to be adopted as a town ordinance. John raised health issues caused by dog’s feces getting into ponds and water as well as urine ruining the grass on the playing fields. Pat brought in the current town dog ordinance. There is nothing about a pooper scooper rule. The commission would like Lois to write an article discussing the amount of maintenance that the fields require. She could include a discussion on the health issues involved. The commission could go before the Board of Health to discuss the pooper scooper ordinance.

John will print out a list of the web-sites that discuss the dog ordinance issues.

**G. Credit Card Payment** – Pat spoke with the Finance Director and received the go ahead to set up credit card payments.

**H. Town Wide Coaches Rules** – no new information

Pat met with the Sports Organizations about permitting the fields. Pat has spoken with Paul Berard, over 30 Softball League, who would like to do some fence work at the VFW. Pat gave him a quote for the work.

An issue came up with the inability of our crew to line the fields because they were school fields and not recreation fields. Unfortunately only the boy’s lacrosse fields were lined and not the girls, for last weekend. This situation goes back to the discussion of having centralized control of the fields.

## **V. Reports/Updates**

**A. Westford Partnership for Children** – everything is fine.

**B. Budgets** – FY’07 budget. Steve Ledoux, Town Manager, has notified the Department Heads that there are no new positions being included in the budget. There are very few capital items included. The Board of Selectman elected to have no debt exclusion. The town is going to use some of the Town’s reserves. Use of the reserves could lower our bond rating.

Any job in the pay classification plan could come up for discussion at the Town meeting. Residents may ask to eliminate positions and/or departments. The commission needs to decide how they will address this issue if it comes up. The Department is creating a fact sheet for the meeting; to include number of programs, enrollment, number of jobs created, etc. The positions and the department may need to be defended as well as determining what would happen to the current union positions in the department if the town chooses to get rid of the positions. Pat would be happy to address any questions about the department or positions within the department.

The Personnel Advisory Committee was supposed to be disbanded but there are two individuals who would like to continue the committee or to at least allow for citizen input.

**C. Fields/Parks:**

- a. Grounds – It is too early in the season to tell about the condition of the fields, but overall they look good. Stony Brook does not appear to have any root development. The front fields have been designated as the Veterans Memorial Fields (Veterans 1 and 2, Veterans Softball, Veterans Baseball), the back fields behind the school will be known as Stony Brook (Stony Brook Softball, Stony Brook Utility field, Stony Brook Football field and Track). The plan is to limit the playing use to 450 hours. The Hamilton field is lined for soccer and little league baseball. The Frost field still needs repairs from the work done to connect to the new waste water treatment facility at Abbot.
  - b. Structures – no new information
  - c. Fencing – Adult softball wants to improve the fence on the softball field at VFW.
  - d. Parking – (American Legion parking) – already discussed with the American Legion playground.
- D. Comprehensive Town Master Plan** – There was a meeting last week. The group went over a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a consultant to help the town update the 1995 master plan. The Comprehensive plan is more detailed (200 pages). It will take all of the little plans and pull them together. This will become the working document for the town.

**VI. Old Business**

- A. Skate Park** – no new information
- B. WPC Software** – Dennis Chretien will create software for WPC.
- C. Heritage Landscape Inventory** – Pat is the local contact. We received the grant. They will hold a town meeting to allow the residents to determine “What makes Westford, Westford”. It identifies what the town would like to preserve. This will be completed by June – the state pays for it and it will help with the comprehensive master plan.
- D. Pesticide Policy** – There was a meeting two weeks ago. There is another meeting this Thursday. We believe the committee now understands that what we do on town property is not what might be done on private property. Example we have to get rid of clover on our fields because bees are attracted to it and create a danger.

It would be beneficial to the committee if the School Department attended the meetings.

## **VII. New Business**

- A. **VFW** – The Village View Trust property is being used by ATV's. A resident asked for help in preventing the access. Pat will ask Jonathan to place boulders at the entry points to prevent the access of ATV's and dirt bikes.
- B. **Eagle Scouts** – The Eagle scouts are looking for projects. Kacy suggested the dugout projects at the American Legion fields. Pat also mentioned this request to East Boston Camps committee. Pat will talk to Jonathan about other projects.
- C. **Town Meeting** –already discussed with budget.
- D. **Regional Junior Olympics** – The Parks & Recreation Department is hosting the local and regional Junior Olympic Skills Competition. The local event is April 21 and the regional event will be held on June 17<sup>th</sup>. Local non-profit organizations will have the opportunity to have vending booths. We will have an opening ceremony with representatives from the 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. There will be a minimum of 250 participants in addition to the fans. We will ask for each organization to donate money to the department for their vending space. We will also regulate the price of the food being sold.
- E. **Sports Potential** - Pat spoke with a representative from this company. The company assesses children to determine their adeptness for particular sports. They charge \$135/child, the Parks & Recreation Department would receive 37% of the fee. The commission is not interested in this program.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

Steve motioned to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. John seconded the motion. Agreed unanimously. Next meeting is Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup>.